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Westly Proposes New Standards for Stem Cell Accountability

PALO ALTO – Appearing before the California Institute of Regenerative Medicine oversight committee, State Controller Steve Westly called today for new accountability measures for spending public stem cell research funds.

Westly, who will also chair the Financial Accountability Oversight Committee created under Proposition 71, called for the panel to establish extra performance measures and report annually to ensure accountability.

“High accountability standards will go a long way toward building public confidence in our stem cell research efforts,” Westly said. “The Institute should report on the steps it’s taking to promote jobs, revenues and research aimed at finding cures.”

Controller Westly offered suggestions to the Independent Citizens’ Oversight Committee on ways to track its progress beyond the requirements of the proposition. Westly proposed performance measures including that the Committee require grant applicants to evaluate their project’s potential for creating jobs and generating revenues. He also recommended that the Committee report on the added performance measures annually and contract for a yearly performance audit.

In addition, the State Controller’s Office provided recommendations to the Committee on grant administration and fiscal practices at the National Science Foundation, National Institute of Health and the Stem Cell Research Foundation. Westly suggested that the Committee could take early steps to put checks and balances into place that ensure proper accountability.

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